2026-2027 Parent Guide

Funshine Treehouse

ZOO PRESCHOOL @ RANDALL OAKS ZOO

IMPORTANT DATES

August 17	M/W/F First Day *(not regular student attendance day)* **Meet and Greet** 9:00-10:00 am or 11:00-12:00 pm *There is no extended day on the first day of school.*
August 18	T/TH First Day *(not regular student attendance day)* **Meet and Greet** Morning Session 9:00-10:00 am and 10:30-11:30 am Afternoon Session 12:00-1:00 pm and 1:30-2:30 pm
September 7	No School - *Labor Day*
September	Picture Day - *TBD for both M/W/F & T/TH Classes*
October 9	No School - *Teacher In-service Day*
October 12	No School - *Holiday*
October 26	M/W/F Parent(s)/Student Fall Fest *(not regular student attendance day)*
October 27	T/TH Parent(s)/Student Fall Fest *(not regular student attendance day)*
November 23-24	Parent Conferences
November 23-27	No School - *Fall Break*
Dec. 21-Jan. 1	No school - *Winter Break*
January 4	Classes resume
January 18	No School - *Martin Luther King Jr. Day*
February 15	No School - *Presidents' Day*
March 26	No School - *District 300 Holiday*
March 29-April 2	No School - *Spring Break*
April 28	No School - *Teacher In-service Day*
April 29	Treehouse Performance Day - *T/TH*
April 30	Treehouse Performance Day - *M/W/F*
May 13	T/TH Last Day of School
May 14	M/W/F Last Day of School
May 17	End of Year Family Picnic - *All Classes*

Funshine Treehouse follows School District 300 calendar and closings www.d300.org.

CLASS TIMES & TEACHERS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Ms. Felicita, Ms. Laura, Ms. Qiushi

Time: 9:00 am-12:00 pm
Optional Extended Time: 12:00-1:30 pm

Tuesday, Thursday
Ms. Felicita, Ms. Laura, Ms. Allison

Morning Session: 9:00-11:00 am
Afternoon Session: 12:00 -2:30 pm

CONTACT INFORMATION

Funshine Treehouse Preschool
(847) 586-5002

Ms. Felicita, *Lead Teacher*
(224) 760-2733 (call/text)
funshinetreehouse@dtpd.org

Jules Farino, *Zoo Program Supervisor*
(847) 551-4310 x5006
(224)760-6009 (cell/text)
judoni@dtpd.org

Dear Funshine Treehouse Families,

Welcome to our Preschool! We are delighted that your child will be joining us for the upcoming year. We will introduce your child to the wonderful world of Randall Oaks Park and Zoo while providing a rich classroom experience. Our preschoolers will be discovering and learning about nature and the animals right outside of our front door. We believe that children do their best learning through play. At our preschool, children are encouraged to discover at their own pace in a warm environment that promotes each child's social, emotional, and cognitive development.

Ms. Felicita, Ms. Laura, Ms. Qiushi, and Ms. Allison are all excited for the start of school!

Funshine Treehouse

Preschool Programs

Almost 3's and 3's Program *(Age 3 by November 1)* T/TH 9:00 am-11:00 am
Our young 3-year-olds will get the time to learn to explore the classroom and activities at their own pace. At this age, they have a natural drive to act independently and learn best by doing. We will provide an environment that will help foster your child's natural development. We will provide guidance and offer opportunities for them to build their social skills. Our one large group time will involve songs, dancing, stories, games, and fingerplays.

Mixed Ages 3-5 *(Age 3 by 9/1/2025)* T/TH 12:00-2:30 pm
Our mixed age classroom will give opportunities for your child to explore the classroom and activities at their own pace. Activities that are offered will be open-ended and allow for differentiated learning. Children can relax and learn at their own pace. They can focus on their own learning goals and progress. The mixed age classroom gives the older children a chance to demonstrate leadership and nurturing. The younger children benefit from interactions with older students and are inspired by them. There will be two large group times. In the first one, we will sing songs, go over our Zoo Phonics, work on a game or learning activity together, and introduce some of the choices we will have out for them during work time. The second large group time will be quieter, we will read a story and have a conversation about our day.

PreK Ages 4-5 *(Age by 9/1/2025)* M/W/F 9:00 am-12:00 pm with optional extended time 12:00-1:30 pm
The PreK class will give your child time to explore the classroom and activities at their own pace. This age group enjoys interacting with others and we will give them time and opportunities to practice working cooperatively. Learning is play-based, and the day is extended to allow for uninterrupted, free play time and opportunities for teacher-led small group activities. Small group activities will be based on a skill that is the focus for the day: math, language, fine motor, or sensorial. The activities will be differentiated to allow your child to work at their own pace while developing the skills needed to prepare for kindergarten. There will be two large group times. The first one, we will sing songs, go over our Zoo Phonics, work on a game or learning activity together, and introduce the choices of activities we will put out for them during work time. The second large group time will be quieter, we will read a story and have a conversation about our day.

If you choose the extended day program, we will eat lunch together and then enjoy some extra outdoor exploration. This may be hiking, outdoor learning, or an extra zoo trip where we enrich the animals. We will have extra time to do more cooking, science experiments, or crafts that may not have been able to be finished during the regular day. It also gives the children time to play and enjoy each other's company. Children do their best learning through play, and we want to give them as many opportunities to play and explore.

First Day of School Meet and Greet

The first day of school will be a Meet and Greet Child and Parent Day (or Guardian) and will only be for an hour. The class will be divided into groups, and each group will attend for one hour. We ask that one adult attend class with your child on this day. It will give you and your child a chance to get to know the classroom together and meet the teachers. This will be a special time for you and your child, we ask that you find alternate care for siblings. You will be getting an invite to the time you and your child are to attend by August 3. If you prefer a certain time, please let me know by July 27. We will not have snack time on the first day. You will have a chance to turn in the Student Information and Medical Waiver forms or fill them out during the Meet and Greet. You can also bring extra clothing that will be placed in your child's cubby.

Communication

Our partnership with our families is a key element of the Funshine Treehouse program. Please know that you can contact us with questions, even if they seem inconsequential. The best way to reach the Teachers while not in school is funshinetreehouse@dtpd.org.

We are proud to announce the adoption of ePACT Network, a health and safety software, to better support all our members and make it easier to submit critical data securely! ePACT is a secure digital solution that allows you to quickly share the health and emergency information we need, and provides us with powerful communication tools to ensure we have a way to message you in the event of an illness, injury, or larger scale emergency. After registration, you will receive an email from ePACT to complete the process. All required forms and waivers must be submitted before your child can participate in preschool.

We also use the HOMEROOM app as another way to communicate with our families. Homeroom is easily downloadable, and you will be able to view pictures of your child's time at Funshine as well as see notes, reminders, and other important information. If you need to contact the Teachers or your child during school, please call the school at (847) 586-5002. There may be times that we are out exploring, or we cannot step away from the children. When that happens, please leave a message or call/text message Ms. Felicita at (224)760-2733. You can also contact Jules at (847) 551-4310 x5006; (224) 760-6009 or email judoni@dtpd.org.

Closings and Change of Schedules

Parents/Guardians will receive an email and a text about changes to the schedule or closings through ePACT. A message will also be posted on your child's Homeroom Page on the **HOMEROOM** app. Both ePACT and the HOMEROOM app will be used to send reminders about special events. We follow District 300 for weather closings.

Attendance/Late Arrivals/Early Dismissal

We ask that you let us know if your child will not be at school, will be arriving late, or needs to be picked up early. Please call the school before the start of class to report your child absent or late *(you can leave a voicemail)*. If messaging or emailing is your preferred method, you may use the other ways to communicate with us. For early dismissals, you can let us know when you drop off your child or use your preferred method to contact us.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

For arrival and dismissal, please line up with your child on the sidewalk outside of our building. Parents will be met by a Treehouse teacher outside of the door of our building for arrivals. Please bring your child to the door, one family at a time. Teachers take attendance once the children are in the classroom. At dismissal, please stand by the sidewalk with your ePACT login. A teacher will walk out and meet you outside the door to check your child out. You can then walk into the classroom to get your child.

For the morning class, we will come and meet you at the black gate to let you in five minutes before the start of class. But keep in mind that our classroom doors open at 9:00 am. Our doors open at 12:00 pm for the afternoon class. (If we are running a little late, you may open the gate to get in and then we as to please wait on the sidewalk outside our school). Please remember to close the gate behind you. The zoo has asked us to keep it closed until the zoo opens.

Please be on time for dismissals. Children get anxious when parents and caregivers are late.

We take the safety of your child seriously and want to make sure he/she goes home safely. At dismissal, we will use ePACT to check out your child. This will either be done via QR code from your ePACT login or a manual sign out through the network if the QR code is not working. As a reminder, you must be under the United States region to login to ePACT. It is best to upload pictures of all your child's guardians and support network in ePACT to ensure a smooth check out process. A picture ID may be required if these images are not in ePACT. If someone new is picking up your child for the day, please upload their information to ePACT asap. Please also be patient at dismissal as we get to know you at the beginning of the school year. We will try our best to have the children ready five minutes before dismissal time to get dismissal started a little early.

What to Bring on the First Day

- Backpack or tote with their name clearly labeled on the outside of the backpack
- Full change of clothes *(pants, shirt, underwear, socks)* to remain at school in a Ziploc Bag with their name on it. This will remain in their cubby.
- Water bottle with their name on it

Please don't bring toys or other items from home.

What to Wear

We do get messy as we explore our environment. Please have your child dress appropriately for the weather. We will not be outside when the "feel like" temperature drops below 15°F to 20°F. Windchill is a factor for us to be outdoors. We may be outside if the temperature is 15°F with no wind and lots of sunshine. If it is not too cold and raining just a little, we may be outside exploring changes in our environment during the rain. There are days we will be outside for an hour, and other days for 5 minutes (in colder temperatures it may be just a quick walk to another building). Our goal is to try to spend 30 minutes outside.

Interesting things happen in nature when the weather changes, and we will go out and explore these changes. We may be out and exploring mud, puddles, and snow. It will get wet and messy. We may even go search for tadpoles in a "pond" made by rain. Extra clothes in your child's cubby will help in case your child needs to change out of clothes that got a little too wet or messy during these adventures. Some items that you may wish to have for your child this school year are closed toe shoes, hats, gloves/mittens, waterproof gloves/ mittens, coat, snow boots, snow pants, rain boots, and raincoats. If your child needs sunscreen or bug spray, please apply these before your child arrives at school. (Extended day students can bring sunscreen/bug spray to be kept in the classroom for reapplication. A Permission to Dispense Medication Form will need to be filled out and turned into us).

Water and Snacks

Please send a refillable water bottle with your child each day with their name clearly labeled on it. Children must take their water bottles home each day to be cleaned. They can refill their water at our preschool.

We have Family Style Snack Time and and families will provide snacks. Parents provide snacks on a rotating basis. Monthly snack calendars will be sent home at the beginning of each month. With the exception of birthdays and holiday parties, we ask that snacks be relatively healthy and low in added sugar. We will provide cups, napkins, and any needed utensils. Some suggestions for healthy snacks are pretzels, goldfish crackers, graham crackers, bananas, grapes, raisins, apples, carrots, cheese, and low-sugar yogurt (these are just examples; you can always ask us if you are not sure of what to bring)

Items do not need to be in individual bags since we will be learning how to serve ourselves, pour our own drinks, and cut our own fruit. We will let families know if there are any food allergies in their child's class. *Any child with food allergies, food sensitivities, or food preferences may bring their own snack.
We are a nut free school.

Extended Day Lunch

This is for the children in our M/W/F extended day program. Each child will need to bring their own lunch in a lunchbox or bag. Please label the lunchbox/bag with your child's name.

Birthdays

We love birthdays! Please let us know if you would like to celebrate your child's birthday during the class day. If your child's birthday falls during a Spring or Winter break, just let us know if you would like to pick another day to celebrate. For summer birthdays, you can pick another day during their "half birthday" to hold it.
We will ask your child if we can sing Happy Birthday to him or her during our circle time. Your child can bring in a special treat to share with the class. Some families choose to bring a snack treat, others prefer to send home goody bags. It will be your choice.
You may also bring a picture of your child for each year of his or her life (ex: for someone turning 4 years old you can bring an infant picture, one year old pic, two-year-old pic, and a three-year-old pic). The children enjoy seeing how a friend has grown. Please let us know if you brought pictures.

Donations for the Beginning of School

We do ask for help in starting our supplies for the beginning of the year. You may bring these with you on the first day of school. We would appreciate it if you can donate either:

- 2 Paper Towel Roll and/or box of Kleenex
- Hand soap and/or hand sanitizer
- Plastic spoons or dixie cups
- Baby Wipes
- Stationary paper, envelopes, scrapbook paper, or stickers

We are always in need of donations throughout the school year. Throughout the year, a family will be given a handout with an item that is needed (it may only be 2-3 items at a time). Examples of items that may be needed are hand sanitizer, tissues, hand soap, paper towels, baby wipes, disinfecting wipes, and Dixie cups.

Medications and Medication Waiver Form

We recognize that preschoolers will, on occasion, require the consumption of prescription and/or non-prescription medications. Please let the teachers know your child's medical needs as soon as possible that way we are prepared.

If your child requires medication, you will need to fill out our permission to dispense medication form; this form is to be used if there is a medication, such as an EpiPen, that the teachers will be dispensing or holding onto for the year. If you aren't sending medication, you can ignore the form. Extended Day families: sunscreen and bug spray are considered medications, and you will need a form. If your child has allergies, we will need an allergy action plan for your child. This will let us know the steps we need to take in case of accidental exposure. Your physician will be able to assist with this. It is important that you let us know if your child has medication in their backpack. Your child's backpack is accessible to your child (and other children) throughout the day. Further, medications will be secured in our lock box. Please put your child's name on the medication and place it in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on it and we will return it at dismissal. (This includes Sunscreen and Bug Spray that is in their backpacks). All medication information must be completed in ePACT as well as the form before the start of school.

Health Procedures for Students and Teachers

We ask that you please do not send a sick child to school. Please keep your child at home if any of these symptoms are present: Fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, fatigue, body aches, headache, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, congestion, runny nose, undiagnosed rashes, discharge from eyes, stomachache, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Children who become sick during school hours must be picked up immediately.

A child may return to school if they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication, coughing or breathing problems have subsided, and have had no vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours. Isolation for communicable diseases *(including Covid 19)* varies. If your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, your child's doctor will be able to let you know when your child is able to return. Feel free to contact us if you have questions about our guidelines or the day your child can return.

Classroom Hygiene and Toileting Procedures

Please teach your child the importance of handwashing, using tissues to wipe noses, and coughing into their elbow. Hand sanitizer is placed around the classroom. Children will be reminded to use the sanitizer throughout the day. Children will be reminded to wash their hands frequently. Children must be able to use the toilet independently *(no pull-ups)*. The teachers will be able to "talk" your child through their bathroom routine if necessary. Please plan your child's outfit for independence in the bathroom and change their clothes if necessary. We will call a parent, or the contact person, in case your child needs further help.

Appropriate Behavior Policy

We want to make sure that your child has fun and always feels safe at Funshine Treehouse. For this reason, we have the following policy concerning disruptive behavior:

1. The parent/guardian will be informed of the specific behavior.
2. If this behavior continues, the teacher will let you know a second time. At this time, it may be recommended to set up a Parent/Teacher conference to discuss how to better help your child.
3. If we feel the behavior continues even after implementing the agreed strategies that we discussed together, your child may be asked to take a break from preschool for a little while.

Note: "Disruptive Behavior" is any behavior that causes or could lead to personal injury of your child or others. Examples: hitting, kicking, throwing things, defying or running away, or any behavior that disrupts the normal school climate. "Disruptive Behavior," in a broad sense, is any behavior that takes one of the adults in the classroom away from the group for long periods of time.

Separation and Meeting Individual Needs

It is completely normal for your child to have anxiety before beginning this new adventure. Your teachers have a lot of experience helping children adjust to school. Some tears are to be expected. Children adjust on their own time and it may be a day, week, month for your child to become comfortable. All of this is completely normal.

The First Day

- Start adjusting to a back-to-school bedtime a week before school starts.
- Let your child pick out their own outfit.
- Let your child know that being scared is OK. Remind them that the teachers are there to help them with their feelings.
- Children look to adults to figure out how they should be feeling about things. Project calm and happy so your child can see that you are comfortable with school.
- A quick goodbye is best, but never leave without saying goodbye. As a matter of fact, goodbye is a great way to let your child know that this is a safe place and that you trust your child.
- We will never hesitate to call if your child needs some extra support. We will work with you to figure out what is best for your child.
- Sometimes the second day of school is the more difficult one.

Children think that they have already gone to school and don't see school as a regular event yet.

Sometimes a comfort item from home that is kept in the backpack helps a child with the transition to school. Please just let us know if your child will need one since our policy is to keep items at home. We do make exceptions for these circumstances. We will make time for your child to visit and hold their item. As the child gets used to the new routine, we will take their lead on putting it back in their backpack. Some children feel better just knowing it is in there. In a week or two, you may find that your child may not need it at school.

During the School Year

If your child has had a difficult night, morning, or weekend, please email the teacher staff, or send a quick message to Ms. Felicita. You can also pull the teacher aside at arrival. This will let the teachers know if your child needs extra time, patience, help and love during the day. We are a team, and we want to work with you to help your child at our preschool.